

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for treating an upper airway condition of a patient, said method comprising:

selecting ~~an~~ a solid implant of pre-formed dimensions and formed of biocompatible fibers formed of a material selected to induce a fibrotic response of material amount, said implant being sized for implantation into a soft tissue area of said patient, said biocompatible fibers being selected to stiffen said soft tissue area passively, and without application of external energy, alter a dynamic response of said tissue to airflow; and

implanting said implant into said soft tissue area to stiffen said soft tissue area for treatment of said upper airway condition.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said implant is a braid of biocompatible fibers.

3. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said implant is a twisted construction of biocompatible fibers.

4. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said implant is a bolus of a particulate material selected for limited migration within said soft tissue area.

5. (Original) A method according to claim 4 wherein said biocompatible fibers are selected to induce a fibrotic response from said soft tissue area.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said upper airway condition is sleep apnea.

8. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said upper airway condition is snoring.
9. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said implant is an elongated construction of biocompatible fibers.
10. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said soft tissue area includes tissue located in a pharyngeal wall of said patient.
11. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said soft tissue area includes tissue located in a nasal area of said patient.
12. (Original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said implant is a permanent implant.